

Vermont's Congressional Delegation – Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Congressman Peter Welch (D-Vt.) – this week announced the nominations of 29 Vermont high school students for appointments to the U.S. Service Academies. Vermonters nominated by members of the Delegation include applicants to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Air Force Academy and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Congressional nominations are required for applications to the prestigious academy programs. Students offered appointments will receive full scholarships and can graduate as commissioned officers in the military.

Leahy, Sanders and Welch recognized the young Vermonters in a reception with the nominees and their families that the Delegation hosted on Sunday at the Statehouse in Montpelier.

Leahy said, "The challenges we face as a nation today require leadership based on integrity, quality education, critical thinking and decision making skills. In carrying on our state's long tradition of service to community and country, these young Vermonters are the best of the best. Their willingness to serve and develop their full leadership potential is a testament to their families and friends, their schools and our state."

Sanders said, "I am proud of the Vermonters nominated to the service academies, and they should be proud of their academic accomplishments and commitment to public service. I am confident that those students who are accepted at the academies and go on to serve their country will be outstanding representatives of Vermont."

Welch said, "At a young age, these Vermonters have shown a remarkable commitment to their state and country. Their hard work, dedication and leadership potential speaks volumes about them as individuals and their future. As they join the generations of Vermonters that have made our state and nation proud, I commend their desire to serve and wish them the best."

Nominees will be notified by the Academies whether they will be offered appointments in early 2011. Vermonters interested in obtaining service academy nominations can contact Leahy's office at (802) 229-0569, Sanders' office at (802) 862-0697, or Welch's office at (802) 652-2450. The deadline for completed application materials for the class of 2016 is December 1, 2011.

Photos courtesy of Congressman Welch are available [here](#). Full photo album courtesy of Senator Leahy's office will be available at leahy.senate.gov on January 4, 2011.

CLASS OF 2015 NOMINEES FOR U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES

Raelene S. Begin of Beecher Falls (Air Force Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Welch

Nicholas M. Bruno of Fairhaven (Merchant Marine Academy & Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Gavin M. Chase of Fort Riley, KS (Air Force Academy, Military Academy, & Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Hudson T. Cox of Hartland (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Tyler J. Derderian of Colchester (Air Force Academy, Naval Academy & Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Thomas R. Dubyak of Severna Park, MD (Naval Academy & Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Christian G. Eckhardt of Underhill (Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Nathaniel R. Flower of Enosburg Falls (Military Academy & Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Welch

Melissa A. Gfeller of Rutland (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Christopher A. Gratton of Burlington (Air Force Academy, Merchant Marine Academy, Military Academy, & Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Maxfield J. Johnson of Danville (Air Force Academy & Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Jonathan T. Kascenska of Lyndonville (Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Welch

Kenneth A. Koonz of Montpelier (Air Force Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Amanda E. Leffler of Enosburg Falls (Air Force Academy & Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Welch

Quincy McDougal of Lincoln (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Amber L. Menard of Hardwick (Air Force Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders

Kyle W. Morse of Barre (Air Force Academy & Merchant Marine Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy

Andrew A. O'Leary of Norwich (Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Dylan R. Parkin of Bradford (Air Force Academy, Merchant Marine Academy, Military Academy, & Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Lucas Porter of Colchester (Air Force Academy)

Nominated by: Welch

Adam M. Reed of Barre (Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Christopher Sadler of Essex Junction (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy

Derek J. Sargent of Guilford (Air Force Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Seth C. Schmidt of Apex, NC (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Stefan A. Schmidt of South Londonderry (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Welch

Matthew M. Sims of Stratton (Military Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Welch

Jacob M. Steponaitis of Vergennes (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders,

Lillian G. Teale of Hyde Park (Military & Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch

Torrie D. Weston of East Calais (Naval Academy)

Nominated by: Leahy, Sanders, Welch